

A NEW NAME FOR THE WILD SHEEP OF NORTHEASTERN CHINA.

The wild sheep of the mountains north of Peking was described and figured by Peters in 1876 under the name *Ovis jubata*. This name is preoccupied by *Ovis aries jubata* Kerr, 1792 (*Anim. Kingd.*, p. 330) and *Ovis jubata* Fitzinger, 1860 (*Wiss.-pop. Naturg. der Säugeth.*, vol. 5, p. 243). Lydekker, 1913 (*Cat. Ungulate Mamm.*, vol. 1, p. 96) erroneously adopted the name *Ovis argali mongolica* Severtzow, 1873 (*Trans. Soc. Nat. Moscou*, vol. 8, art. 2, p. 154) for this mountain sheep, but this name is preoccupied by the *Ovis steatopyga mongolica* of Fitzinger, 1860 (*Wiss.-pop. Naturg. der Säugeth.*, vol. 5, p. 31), and the question of its applicability need not here be considered. Other names placed with a query by Lydekker in the synonymy of "mongolica" (*Ovis argali dauricus* Severtzow and *Ovis darwini* Przewalski) are not available for the very distinct sheep described by Peters. The *Ovis jubata* of Peters (*Mon.-ber. K. Preuss. Akad. Wiss.*, 1876, p. 177, pls. 1-4), being without a valid name, may be called *Ovis comosa*.

—N. Hollister.

THE FAMILY NAME OF THE AMERICAN WOOD WARBLERS.

Under either of the rules that have been advocated for the determination of family names in zoology, the present designation of the Mniotiltidae must be changed. For a number of years up to 1838 the birds of this group were referred to the Paridae or to the Sylviidae without even subfamily distinction; but in 1838 Bonaparte (*Geog. and Comp. List Birds Europe and North America*, p. 20) instituted for them the subfamily Sylvicolinae, based on the genus *Sylvicola* Swainson. Some years later this subfamily was raised to family rank, and thereafter until 1877 it continued to be known as Sylvicolidae. Since, meanwhile, the generic name *Sylvicola* had passed out of use because preoccupied, Mr. Robert Ridgway, in 1877, changed the family name to Mniotiltidae (*U. S. Geol. Explor.* 40th Par., IV, No. 3, 1877, p. 427), based on the genus *Mniotilta* Vieillot. If, however, the oldest genus in the family be used as the type genus, this distinction will fall to *Icteria* Vieillot (1807), and the family name will become Icteriidae, which is confusingly near the family name Icteridae, now in use for the American Orioles or Hangnests. A better rule, at least in this case, would be to use as a type genus the generic group first made the basis of the family name. In the family of wood warblers this is the genus now known as *Compsothlypis* Cabanis, which, when called by the preoccupied name *Sylvicola* Swainson (*Philos. Mag.*, new series, I, June, 1827, p. 433, type designated by Swainson [*Zool. Journ.*, III, 1827, p. 169] as *Sylvia pusilla* Wilson = *Compsothlypis americana pusilla* [Wilson]), was the type genus of the family Sylvicolidae. Our wood warblers, now called Mniotiltidae, should, therefore, become Compsothlypidae.

—Harry C. Oberholser.